



Minutes of Council Work Session Meeting
Buchanan, VA

March 9, 2023

Present: Mayor Tristan Harris
Councilmember Manspile
Councilmember Marlon Rickman
Councilmember James Eubank

Mayor Harris called the March 9, 2023 work session to order at 7:00 p.m. This meeting was held in the Council Room. Mayor Harris asked Town Treasurer John Griffin to take roll call. With four councilmembers present, a quorum was established. Mayor Harris asked for a moment of silence then the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

The first item for discussion was the Town web site. Town Manager Peck stated the Town web site is antiquated and very difficult to run. He recommends Town get a system by CivicPlus and Municode. It is one of the most widely used systems by small municipalities. It also helps automate agenda management and gives greater transparency for the public. Town Manager Peck demonstrated what the system can do. Town Manager Peck stated the prices for different levels of service and how long it will take to set up the web site.

The next item for discussion was the replacement of Quickbooks accounting software. Mary Earhart has recommended that Town has outgrown the Quickbooks software. Town Manager Peck stated that the most economical and is used by a lot of municipalities in Virginia is Southern Software. Town Treasurer Griffin stated that a demonstration has been scheduled for March 22. Town Manager Peck stated that a good accounting software will help make reports that will help in decision making. Town Manager Peck stated there are a couple things in the current budget that are different from what was passed and what is loaded into Quickbooks. There are some items that are off tremendously. Councilmember Manspile stated that some of the items do have line items. Town Manager Peck stated the items need to be allocated to the correct items instead of one big item. Councilmember Manspile stated Town should have a forensic audit done. Town Manager Peck stated he does not think there is an issue there. Town Treasurer Griffin stated he doesn't think it is needed either. Town Treasurer Griffin stated he has used Quickbooks and loves it, but it is not for government and municipalities. Councilmember Rickman asked what Town can use ARPA funds for? Town Manager Peck stated it can be used for any normal government operations except reserve funds or paying pensions. You still have to account for it.

The next item for discussion was the phone system. Town Manager Peck stated that the current phone system is hard to operate. The customer service is hard to deal with, and you have to call them to make any changes. The proposed system. Ooma, is very easy to use and is administered in house. Ooma is also cheaper. Town Manager Peck stated he is looking into changing the lines at the water facilities that

are used for warnings as well. Councilmember Manspile stated the hard lines for the water facilities are required by the state. The warning system has to be maintained at all times.

The next item for discussion was the VRS hybrid employees. One of the changes they made to the retirement system was to add a disability component. It escalates with the number of years of service. If you are out for 7 days, and can't come back after that, you automatically go on short term disability. This is funded by the Town. Town needs to set up the rules. Most municipalities make a paid time off system. This way all employees have their paid time off in one pot. Town Manager Peck stated that the current Town annual leave policy is horrendous. He has not seen any local government that has anywhere near what Town does. There was a comparison to Botetourt County's annual leave policy.

The next item for discussion was Life Insurance. Town does not currently have life insurance through VRS. Town does not currently participate. You can join, but ¾ of employees must agree to participate then all the employees are covered. Town Manager Peck stated that he has never paid the employee part of the cost. The employer usually pays for the life insurance. Councilmember Manspile asked if the current employees have been polled. Town Manager Peck stated you do not have to ask the employees if the employer pays for it.

The next item for discussion was pay practices. Council gives the Town Manager authority to give raises and stuff within the compensation plan, but there is no compensation plan. The state compensation plan was included for references. Town Manager Peck stated Town needs to set up parameters on salary ranges, guidelines for bonuses, and other criteria as needed. Job Descriptions and salaries need to be added as well. Town Manager Peck stated when things are approved, they need to be notated. Councilmember Manspile stated that Council needs to look into adding the employee +1 or family packages with Town paying part of the package.

The next item for discussion was the ARPA funds. Town Manager Peck stated the hand out showed what had been spent, what Town is currently spending money on, and what is proposed. Council may want to use the ARPA funds for some things instead of general funds. Councilmember Manspile stated that Town needs to add heat to the basement of the Town Hall. Councilmember Manspile asked if Town can use ARPA funds to pay off the Truck. Town Manager Peck stated you can't use ARPA funds, but Town has enough unassigned funds. You cannot use ARPA funds to pay off debt. Councilmember Rickman asked if ARPA funds can be used to repair the alleyways.

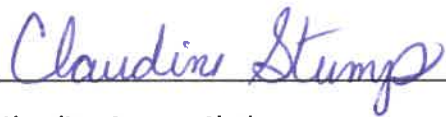
Mayor Harris asked what will be up for vote on Monday. Councilmember Manspile stated items 1,2, and 3 from the work session agenda should be resolutions on Monday's agenda. Mayor Harris stated the only thing stopping the 4th is deciding on the leave hours. Town Manager Peck stated life insurance just needs the resolution and submitting the paperwork.

Councilmember Rickman stated the mowers need to be serviced. Councilmember Manspile stated the John Deere backhoe has a service appointment. Boone Tractor will service the zero turn mowers.

Councilmember Manspile made a motion to adjourn with a second from Mayor Harris. With no further discussion, the motion was carried with a vote of 4 – 0.

Adjournment was at 9:09 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Claudine Stump", written over a horizontal line.

Claudine Stump, Clerk

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of stylized, overlapping loops, written over a horizontal line.

Mayor